THIS IS OUR LIFE

Barry continues writing for you—telling you in his own words the story of The Bee Gees.

DO WE argue among ourselves? Yes, folks, we do! And if you'd guess that it would be the Gibb brothers sticking together against the others, you're guessing wrong. Mind you, all our bust-ups are in the interests of boosting The Bee Gees' career but the sparks really fly at some of our so-called business conferences.

I told you last week how *Mining Disaster* did the trick, at long last, in getting us known in Britain—and getting us in the charts. It also made us feel frightened, scared out of our pants in facr. Because it's not the first hit that matters, it's the second and the third. The worst thing that can happen to a group is to be called one-hit wonders.

Which is what we looked like being. **To Love Somebody,** which Robin and I wrote, didn't take off in England, though it was pretty strong in the States. So our third one suddenly became so important we could hardly sleep. It was, you may remember, **Massachusetts,** on which Maurice worked as part-composer.

And it was Maurice who thought it was a terrible mistake to bring it out. So did Vince and Colin. Robert Stigwood, Robin and I lined on the opposite side. "It'll be a hit," said we. "It'll flop" said they. Fur flew; moans murmured. But our voices of wisdom won the day! Modestly, I'll just remind you that it sold a million, got us a Gold Disc and was out first number one hit.

You'd think, after that argy-bargy, that the others would now shut up and toe the line. They don't. We still argue the toss over what is right and what is wrong. Sheer unadulterated cheek! But when you've got a hit record, things happen.

I've been thinking how in the old days we had to think carefully before we even went on a train ride. Now it's nothing to us to fly off to America just for a business chat. In fact, I was there not so long ago. Just a quick visit. I'm not knocked out by the scene there—there are more phonies to the square yard than anywhere else!

But talk about chaos. I was supposed to go with Robin and Maurice to meet up with Bob Stigwood. It was meant to be a holiday. But they get so organised, those brothers of mine. I was asleep at the time of departure, so I flew over the day after them. Charming . . . when I got there, I realised I didn't even know which hotel they were at.

So I piled three massive cases into a taxi and started the search. Went to the Waldorf. They weren't there. I asked if I could have the use of their telephone to try other hotels. The bloke groaned and said the American equivalent of "Do me a favour, mate!" Then he looked at me and asked if I was with the party of Mr. John Lennon and Mr. Paul McCartney! Those Beatles again. I said I was with The Bee Gees and nothing registered on his face.

"Found another phone box and eventually tracked them down to the Plaza hotel. I was whacked out. And there was my raving brother Maurice saying: "Let's all have a party!" I had one orange juice and went to bed.

Los Angeles the next day. I was like a dead body—and this was supposed to be a holiday! Funny place, LA. All those way outasite characters, or whatever they are. Even middle-aged blokes wearing kaftans and beads. I couldn't keep my eyes open through lack of sleep. And then Robert Stigwood announced blandly: "I'm off to Australia tomorrow. You coming?" Twenty-five hours on a plane. Not me. This was too much for me on what they laughingly called a holiday.

Robin took off for India. Maurice and I hurried back to London.

But see what I mean about how fast life gets when you make the grade in pop music! Bob Stigwood rushes round the world like some non-stop maniac. It's not for me . . .

From eighty degrees of sticky heat in Beverly Hills, we moved to London where it managed to be very cold and damp. I'm not sure life wasn't sweeter back in the days when I had to check my wallet carefully before going on a train journey from London to Manchester!

But since **Massachusetts,** this globe-trotting has been more or less routine. That song, by the way, was written in the early hours of the morning in the St. Regis hotel in New York. The usual thing: out comes a guitar and we hum the tune and then hope to find some words before we actually get in the studio. Robin has a knack of writing the choruses and I do the verse.

Next week I'll tell you how certain people still managed to knock us, despite that number one record. Oh yes, and the final results of The Bee Gees' great Beard-Growing contest, which for me is quite a ticklish matter—if you see what I mean!